

Message Text

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45

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 IO-11 SAM-01 SAJ-01 OMB-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AF-06 ACDA-07 /096 W

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R 061630Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4242

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MOPS, AG, SS

SUBJECT: SAHARA: LATEST POLISARIO CLAIMS

1. CITING DAILY CANARY ISLANDS NEWSPAPER EL ALCAZAR, OFFICIAL ALGERIAN PRESS APRIL 6 CLAIMS THAT RECENT POLISARIO OFFENSIVE HAS CLAIMED LIVES OF 200 MOROCCAN OFFICERS AND MEN AND THAT FURTHER 500 HAVE BEEN WOUNDED. ALSO, A FURTHER 70 MOROCCANS ARE REPORTED KILLED AND 249 WOUNDED IN RECENT POLISARIO ATTACK ON SAHARA. POLISARIO LOSSES PUT AT LESS THAN 5 PERCENT OF THOSE OF ENEMY. FINALLY, MOROCCANS SAID TO BE USING AIRCRAFT TO TRANSPORT PHOSPHATE WORKERS SINCE ENTIRE LENGTH OF BOUCRAA - EL AYOUN CONVEYER BELT MINED.

2. CONTINUING REPORTS ON MOROCCAN SENIOR OFFICER CASUALTIES. PRESS ASSERTS THAT IN ADDITION TO COL. DLIMI AND A LT. COL. DENIA, COL. BENOTHTHMANE, KNOWN AS MOROCCAN HERO OF "AMGALA 1," SAID TO BE HOSPITALIZED IN RABAT AFTER BEING WOUNDED BY POLISARIO MINE. PRESS ALSO CLAIMS THAT ANOTHER COL. HIJAOUI EVACUATED FROM SAHARA FOLLOWING SIMILAR INJURY. HIJAOUI SAID TO BE IN PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL BECAUSE OF EMOTIONAL COMPLICATIONS FOLLOWING AN INJURY.

3. WE HAVE RECEIVED NO INDEPENDENT INDICATION THAT
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POLISARIO MILITARY CAPABILITY HAS INCREASED. OTHER

SOURCES AVAILABLE TO EMBSSY CONTINUE TO ASSERT
THAT SITUATION IN SHARA RELATIVELY CALM AND THAT POLISARIO
STILL UNABLE CONDUCT ANYTHING MORE THAN SIMPLEST
GUERRILLA HARASSMENT OPERATION.PARKER

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